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THE MORAL UNIVERSE

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THE

MORAL UNIVERSE

By

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Worcester, Mass.

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TO THE PRECIOUS MEMORY OF MY
DEAR AND SAINTED

Mother,

WHOSE LOVE WAS DEARER TO ME THAN LIFE, WHOSE PRAYERS AND SYMPATHY WERE MY UNFAILING HELP WHILE SHE LIVED, AND WHOSE ANGELIC PRESENCE AND MINISTRY, I DOUBT NOT, ARE CONSTANTLY WITH ME NOW THAT HER BODILY PRESENCE IS REMOVED FOR A TIME, THIS LITTLE VOLUME IS MOST

devotedly inscribed.

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FOREWORD.

THE following four sermons were preached in a series by the writer on successive Sunday evenings during a revival in his church, the attempt being to set forth in popular form the plan of man's salvation as presented in the Scriptures, and, most explicitly, by the first great theologian of the Church, the inspired apostle, in his Epistle to the Romans.

It is believed, if one will read the Epistle to the Romans with the aid of these sermons, he will the more perfectly understand the teaching of that comprehensive writing, and the more fully comprehend the only "name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

We have written the sermons out in the present form with the hope that they may be helpful to pastors, evangelists, and Christian teachers and workers in general.

We think they will not be profitless reading for the intelligent and earnest layman.

The size of the volume is quite well suited to this electric age, and if the theme is "meat" for

men, and not "milk" for babes, yet we have tried to make as readable and simple as possible the greatest and profoundest subject—the very central subject—of our religion.

We would be gratified if the book should prove to be instructive reading for the hosts of consecrated young people in the Church, who certainly cannot afford to be ignorant of its far-reaching verities.

For those who are looking for something that may be "off color" in morals or doctrine the book will have no interest.

In their present form we think the truth of the sermons as related to each other is best emphasized, truth in its relations being much more important than truth, however valuable, in isolated or disconnected parts.

It is the belief of the writer that few people can intelligently state the truths of the Gospel in their relations. The subject, in so far as it is written upon, is locked up in theological treatises that the people either cannot or do not read. The sermons are an attempt to present the matter in a form that the people can readily understand.

The general skepticism that is prevailing in

certain quarters concerning the atonement was one reason for preaching the sermons, and is a strong reason to the writer for publishing them.

Also, there is much that is ethical in popular thought that is at the same time infidel—infidel, perhaps, because ethical—and much that is of creed that is Antinomian. The true doctrine of the Bible is of faith, but also moral: it is an ethical creed, ethical in the deepest and highest sense, and of faith in the sense of belief in the great truths of life and destiny.

The sermons undertake to exhibit this Gospel view of things.

The suggestions in the volume as to the possible help given us by departed friends, and those concerning the soul's imperishability, will, we trust, interest many, and prove reassuring in regard to both facts.

That the righteous God of our salvation may bless the sermons to the profit of many is the sincere and earnest prayer of the author.

G. W. K.

Worcester, Mass., August 1, 1901.

I.

Righteousness God's Universal Demand.

"Just are the ways of God,
And justifiable to men;
Unless there be who think not God at all."—*Milton.*

"If this fail,
The pillared firmament is rottenness,
And earth's base built on stubble."—*Milton.*

"God is what he is—infinite purity. He cannot change. If creatures are to attain the end of their being, they must be like God in moral purity. Justice is nothing but the recognition and enforcement of this natural necessity. Law is only the transcript of God's nature. Justice does not make law, it only reveals law. Penalty is only the reaction of God's holiness against that which is its opposite. Since righteousness and justice are only legislative and retributive holiness, God can cease to demand purity and to punish sin only when he ceases to be holy, that is, only when he ceases to be God."—*A. H. Strong.*

"Sin is not man's misfortune, but his fault."—*W. G. T. Shedd.*

"The denial of guilt is not the way out. He who takes this road 'kicks against the goads.' And he will find their stabs thickening, the farther he travels, and the nearer he draws to the face and eyes of God."—*Shedd.*

I.

Righteousness God's Universal Demand.

"Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." —Rev. xv, 3.

The Revised Version renders this verse somewhat differently. There it reads, "Righteous and true are thy ways, thou King of the ages." And in the margin of both the Old and the Revised Versions is the alternate reading of "nations" instead of "saints" or "ages."

Now, whichever reading is adopted, the same essential thought is expressed. "Just" and "righteous" express the same idea, and God is King of "saints," King of the "ages," King of "nations," and as King of "saints," of the "ages," and of "nations" he is, has been, and must be "righteous."

Implied in these words is the other idea, that God demands righteousness of all his intelligent moral subjects. He is righteous, therefore we must be righteous. This a righteous God must require of us.

I wish to inquire to-night what righteousness

means in God and man, notice God's universal demand of righteousness, and observe the necessity of this demand.

I.—What Righteousness Means.

1. Righteousness means uprightness, truth, justice, integrity, fidelity. There is no crookedness, deceit, injustice, treachery in God, and righteousness is the same in us.

The words I have just used express the fundamental idea of righteousness, and explain themselves. This is the first idea we get from the word "righteousness," and also from the words of the Old and New Testaments translated "righteousness."

The etymology of the English word probably signifies "wise as to that which is right."

The Hebrew and Greek words translated righteousness signify substantially the same idea.

2. Righteousness, further, is purity, cleanness of thought and life.

A righteous life is not unclean either inside or out. God does not know impurity, and righteous

men are free from it. Even the thoughts of a righteous man are clean.

3. Another element of righteousness is love. "God is love" and "Our God is a consuming fire" are two sides of the same truth. Because God is love he is a consuming fire.

Love is not a mere sentiment without strength: God is not a weakling. Love is right and right is love. Love has righteousness in it and must be righteous, and righteousness has love in it and must love.

Love, moreover, is a righteous duty of all men to all others. It is one of the commandments. "Thou *shalt* love" both God and man is the word of Scripture. He who does not love is not righteous, and he who is righteous will love.

So important is love as an element of a righteous life that upon it hang "all the law"—natural and revealed—and all the moral teaching and denunciations of "the prophets." It is the "fulfilling of the law,"the greatest gift, and the crowning grace of nature and religion. Without it we are "nothing."

If this grace is marred or defective in one particular, we are not complete in righteousness. If jealousy, anger, malice, envy, impatience, un-

kindness, pride, or any other unholy spirit possess us for a moment, our righteousness of love is therein seen to be incomplete, and we thereby fall short "of the glory of God," who is himself "love," who tells us to "love one another" and to love our neighbor as ourselves.

Our love must be complete, not only manward, but Godward. No less a requirement is laid upon us than that we should love our Maker with the whole circle of our nature—"with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind"—and not with a segment of it.

We are to love our "enemies" also, "pray" for them, "bless" them.

Some things, according to our standard of righteousness, we are not to love. "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world (the world of the sinful, and absorption, to the exclusion of heavenly ideals and pursuits, by the world that is not sinful, but legitimate). If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world."

4. A very important thought in the idea of righteousness is that of strict obedience to the laws of God.

A righteous man, in the Bible sense of the word, is a man who keeps God's requirements. To "fear God and keep his commandments" is to be righteous.

5. Righteousness has to do with the motives of the life and acts.

The inner and heart life is not overlooked. "Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life," is not only the counsel of prudence, but the requirement of God's law.

Christ said a "look" might be sin, and John says to "hate" is to be a murderer.

6. To be "innocent," to be "holy," is to be righteous.

These words are synonymous, expressing phases of the general thought of the more comprehensive word of my subject.

7. Other words that express phases of the same general thought are "virtuous," "faultless," "guiltless," dutiful," "sincere."

8. Righteousness pertains to the whole man, body, mind, and spirit.

The Bible calls the body the "temple of the

Holy Ghost" and says, "If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy."

Sin in the Scriptures is very much associated with the "flesh." The mind that is at "enmity against God" is the "carnal" mind. It is the "flesh" that "lusteth against the spirit." If we "sow to the flesh" we "reap corruption."

And who does not know the power of the flesh in temptation as well as of the world and the devil? Like Paul we must keep our bodies under ("buffet" them), if we would be righteous according to divine requirements.

"A sound mind in a sound body" is an old announcement of a law of the mental nature, and a "sound mind"—with pure and strong thinking—and a pure spirit are mutually congenial.

9. God's standard of right makes us responsible for our example.

We are to "abstain from all appearance of evil," and the highest Christian consecration says, "If meat make my brother to offend [stumble], I will eat no flesh while the world standeth."

The highest moral consciousness approves the same standard.

10. God's standard takes note of our words.

"But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." "Whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire."

As words are the transcript of our thoughts, so they are of the spirit and character. This is, no doubt, the reason why they are so much accounted of according to the law of right.

To be righteous, according to God's requirements, is to be wholly righteous—to be absolutely *spotless* in regard to all right and all points in righteousness.

Says St. James: "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all"—he has broken the law of God, and, like a broken vase, it is rendered valueless so far as his observance of it is concerned.

Sin may be in the feelings where there is no particular motive involved, and also in our stumblings as well as in our voluntary transgressions.

Yes, even to neglect any law of God or duty is to sin. "To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin."

These things are not only matters of explicit revelation, but axiomatic in moral consciousness. The consciences of all men, no matter what their moral conduct or attempt at self-palliation, will upon interrogation, if not otherwise, approve them.

II.—Let us look now at God's universal demand of righteousness.

1. He demands it of the heathen as well as of those who have the light of revelation.

When Peter went to Cornelius through the persuasion of God in the vision at Joppa, whereby the Jewish prejudice of the apostle against the Gentiles was broken down, he exclaimed, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."

And surely only such are "accepted with him." So that if an African in the heart of Africa works righteousness, he is accepted, and if an American in the heart of civilization does not work righteousness, he is not and cannot be accepted.

God demands righteousness of all alike, impartially.

2. He demands righteousness of angels as well as of men.

Therefore, when the angels fell they were cast out of heaven.

There are two sources of evidence as to this universal demand, the Scriptures and conscience.

The light of revelation is larger than the light of nature, but conscience, according to its light, demands the right of all men. Hence when we do wrong it makes "cowards of us all," and when we are guilty "every noise affrights" us.

If they should sin, God said of his ancient people: "I will send a faintness into their hearts in the land of their enemies; and the sound of a shaken leaf shall chase them; and they shall flee, as fleeing from a sword; and they shall fall when none pursueth."

Paul says: "For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness [witnessing with them],

and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another."

Conscience is the soul's "moral imperative."

The Scriptures everywhere speak of righteousness as God's unwavering demand upon all.

By this standard all men are approved or condemned; by it all character, all acts, all thoughts are weighed and accepted, or found wanting.

When even a David sins he is pilloried for all time before the world in the sacred pages as under the condemnation of the Almighty. "Thou art the man" is the divine sentence which forever fixes the double guilt of adultery and murder upon the name of the man "after God's own heart."

God does not and cannot spare any man, not even his chosen ones. The Bible never conceals or condones guilt. It looks upon sin only with condemnation, and in the judgment men will be approved or condemned according to their works. The unclean, unrighteous, unholy will go into hell; the clean, the righteous, the holy will go into heaven.

This is everywhere the word of God. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." "For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whore-

mongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie."

Moral ideas and obligations are not footballs with which the children of the world merely play in a game of life. They represent realities that affect far more deeply the interests of our well-being in life and destiny.

III.—Notice, now, the necessity of God's universal demand of righteousness.

1. The government of the universe rests upon it.

"Righteousness and judgment are the habitation [the Revised Version says, "foundation"] of thy throne."

Just so; if God were not righteous and did not demand righteousness of all intelligences, the throne of the universe would fall, and chaos would reign among moral beings everywhere.

The uninspired conjecture that the angels fell through an unholy ambition which revolted against the authority of God finds its inspiration in the human consciousness that such sin must have been cast out of heaven. The only biblical confirmation of the conjecture is an inference

from the warning concerning a New Testament "bishop" or overseer: "Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride [puffed up] he fall into the condemnation of the devil."

But whatever the particular form of the sin of these angels "which kept not their first estate," it was rebellion against God, and so was cast out. God could not "spare" even the angels when they "sinned." So his word says; that is, it says he did not, and we know if he did not he could not.

2. It is the foundation of all human government and society.

The throne of God is back of the governments of men. Without righteousness human society would fall into anarchy. Unless rulers, judges, and all the people observed the laws of righteousness, society would be nothing but a band of robbers preying upon themselves, and society is good and strong just in proportion as men obey these laws.

God must demand righteousness for the ends of human fellowship.

History is full of the story of nations that have fallen through sin.

The mighty Roman empire fell to pieces, like

a moth-eaten garment, at the approach of the barbarian because the Roman empire was rotten in sin.

On the other hand, righteousness has always exalted the nation that practiced it. Indeed, no nation ever grew to importance without righteousness, and the same nation has fallen when it forgot the laws of right written in the conscience or in revelation.

Righteousness is the best protector of any people. Plautus, the Roman, has said: "If the inhabitants have good morals I think the city is properly fortified, but if vices prevail there a hundred walls would be of no avail for preserving its interests."

Good morals have always been better than walls or armies in a people's defense, and the soldiers of a nation strong in virtue are invincible. The old story is that an ambassador visiting Sparta from Epirus was surprised not to find the towns of the former country defended by walls, and asked the reason. "Indeed," said the king, thou canst not have looked carefully. Come with me to-morrow morning and I will show you the walls of Sparta." The next morning the king led his guest out upon the plains

where his army was drawn up in full array, and pointing with pride to his men he exclaimed, "Thou beholdest the walls of Sparta—ten thousand men, and every man a brick!"

"And every man a brick!" Virtuous men are "bricks" in the defense of any nation's life.

"How should one chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight, except their Rock had sold them, and the Lord had shut them up?" suggests not only providential weakness, but providential weakness through the weakness of sin.

3. Righteousness is the foundation of all happiness; of all that is beautiful and good in the life of moral beings.

Sin kills and destroys. It blights every beautiful flower, and turns any life into a waste wilderness.

It ruins not only the sinner, but his associate.

Thence God must demand righteousness.

4. It is the foundation of heaven.

Hence the unrighteous are to be excluded from that perfect society. Should the unrighteous be admitted there heaven would be no better than our earthly home.

Can any man, then, be saved through his own life? through his own righteousness?

Two men, recently, are dying, both of the same disease; both take the same medicine to deaden the terrible pain. One of them is not a Christian, although a man respected by his neighbors, said to be a "nice" man, and outwardly moral. He never accepts and owns Christ as his Saviour, and in dying exclaims, to the fearful alarm and terror of his family, "I'm going to hell! I'm going to hell!"

What did that bitter cry mean?

The other man is a Christian. He calls all the members of his family about him, has a word for all, asks, "What word shall I take to Jesus for you?" and dies in victory.

What was the difference between the two?

Remembering God's unfailing demand of righteousness of all, are you willing to die with nothing but your own record to bring before the judgment seat of the Almighty?

"There is a death, whose pang
Outlasts the fleeting breath:
O, what eternal horrors hang
Around the second death!"

II.

The Necessity and Place of the Atonement in the Moral World.

"Say first, of God above or man below,
What can we reason but from what we know?"—*Pope.*

"How charming is divine philosophy!
Not harsh and crabbed, as dull fools suppose,
But musical as is Apollo's lute,
And a perpetual feast of nectared sweets
Where no crude surfeit reigns."—*Milton.*

"As the design of the incarnation of the Son of God was to reconcile us unto God, and as reconciliation of parties at variance is a work of mediation, Christ is called our Mediator."—*Charles Hodge.*

"Any theory of atonement embodying enough truth to be really a theory must take special account of divine justice."—*Miley.*

"The thing that has to be dealt with, that has to be overcome, in the work of reconciliation is not man's distrust of God, but God's condemnation of man."—*James Denney.*

II.

The Necessity and Place of the Atonement in the Moral World.

"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."—Rom. iii, 23.

I UNDERTOOK to show in the last sermon what righteousness is, its universal demand upon intelligent beings, and the necessity of this demand in the moral world; that the throne of the universe is founded upon it, and, also, the governments of men, and human happiness, and, as well, everything that is beautiful and good and worthy in life; in fact, that righteousness is the backbone of the universe.

To-night I wish to show the necessity and place of atonement in this moral world where righteousness is so universally demanded and imperative.

1. I need take only a moment to define the atonement.

The word "atonement" signifies at-one-ment with God through the sufferings and death of

Christ, or a state of being "at one" with him, or at peace with him.

Other words that are used in the Scriptures to denote the work of Christ for us have the same general signification.

Such, for example, is the word "reconciliation." We are reconciled to God through our Saviour.

Another word is "redemption." Redemption means to be bought back, as from slavery or death. So, according to the Scriptures, we are bought back from the slavery and death of sin through the blood of Christ, our Ransom.

Another word is "propitiation." Christ is the propitiation, or mercy seat where we find acceptance with God in the forgiveness of our sins. God becomes propitious or favorable to us through his Son.

A sinful being could not make the atonement, for he would himself need an atonement; but Christ was sinless.

A human being could not make it, for human beings are sinful; but Christ was divine.

In the nature of the case an atonement must be voluntary, and Christ freely gave himself, as well as was given by the Father.

He was well fitted in all respects to bring to us redemption.

2. The necessity of the atonement is in the fact of universal sinfulness.

The text declares: "All have sinned."

This is the constant voice of the Scriptures.

"That every mouth may be stopped [in denial of guilt], and all the world become guilty before God," they further say is an object of the divine law.

Human history, observation, and consciousness confirm the word of God.

Is there one who has never sinned? Is there one whose moral consciousness is without condemnation?

"No, not one."

Remember, there are other sins besides the sins of the prodigal.

Wasting one's substance in riotous living is not the only crime against God. All sin is crime. There are respectable sins, or sins that are not looked upon by men as being as heinous as the more open and grosser sins, but God looks upon all sins alike. There are sins of thought, and deception, and injustice, and neglect that are fully as bad, from the standpoint of the require-

ments of righteousness, as lying, or stealing, or swearing, or adultery, or murder.

"There is no difference," the apostle declares; "all have sinned," and all stand equally guilty before the requirements of the moral world.

Guilt is guilt, no matter what the particular manner or occasion of it is, or the particular form or substance of it. Sin is sin, and as we have all sinned we are all guilty.

This universal guilt among human beings makes necessary some means whereby we can be forgiven, if we are not to suffer the just retribution of our guilt.

3. We are now led to say, the place of atonement is to meet a moral demand in the government of the universe.

Let us see. A man commits a crime against human society: what is the consequence? He must be punished for it. The interests of human society demand it.

If crime should be let go free, or without punishment, human society would soon reach disintegration. Crime must be punished in order that the good in society may be protected. And so crime is punished.

We punish the criminal, not so much for his

own sake, although we may have in mind his reformation while he is being punished, but for the sake of the society in which he lives and against which he has sinned.

So, likewise, a man commits a crime against the intelligent society of the world, against the government of God among intelligent moral beings (and all sin is such crime): what is to be done?

Shall his crime go unpunished? If so, such a course would soon result in the disintegration of the moral world.

He must be punished.

But the punishment of crime in the moral world is eternal death. Sin has eternal guilt, and eternal punishment is the necessary penalty in the government of the moral universe.

Therefore, all men as sinners must suffer eternal wrath, or some divine plan must be provided whereby God can be "just" and, at the same time, the "justifier" of the guilty.

God has proposed such a plan in his Son.

The story of Bronson Alcott, while an old one, is as good a human illustration of a divine fact as can be found.

This school-teacher conceived the idea of

keeping order in his school, not by inflicting punishment upon the offending pupils, but by receiving the stripes himself from the hand of the guilty ones. The child who had violated the order of the school was compelled to inflict blows upon the teacher.

This discipline had a very beneficial effect upon the offender and the school, and, while painful to the teacher, accomplished the end desired and necessary—good order in the school.

So, in some such way, "the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed."

"God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them."

He stood in our place and suffered for us that we might be saved from the just punishment of our eternal guilt for sin, and that the necessary righteous demands of the moral world might not be ignored.

Looking at Christ, neither angel, archangel, nor human being can say God cares not for righteousness, or the demands of righteousness for the happiness and welfare of moral intelligences. All, all must say sin is crime, sin must

be punished, but God is merciful and can forgive eternal guilt and yet uphold the throne of the world.

The atonement is God's solution of this merciful problem of the moral world. God is righteous, man is guilty; God is merciful, God forgives, his laws are honored, and will finally be perfectly obeyed by all saved and glorified, but now sinning, souls.

> "'Tis mystery all! the Immortal dies!
> Who can explore his strange design?
> In vain the firstborn seraph tries
> To sound the depths of love divine;
> 'Tis mercy all! let earth adore:
> Let angel minds inquire no more."

In theological terminology the doctrine here announced is known as the "governmental" view.

It seems destined to be man's final answer to the mystery of the cross, as it seems also to be the inspired answer.

These words of Paul are profound, far-reaching, and conclusive: "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of

God; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus."

The older philosophy that taught that Christ was a sacrifice to the devil in order that God might justly deliver men from him to whom they had sold themselves by sin, and the doctrine that God's personal wrath needed atonement, are alike superficial.

So, also, is the modern view that Christ satisfied only a moral demand of love and example.

No! no! the atonement of "our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ" is deeper than either. Its necessity finds its answer only in the moral relations of God and his moral subjects, in the eternal ties that bind moral intelligences together in a moral universe.

Let it be observed, moreover, that this necessity is not arbitrary or artificial. It is founded in the deepest necessity of the nature of divine and human moral relations. The necessities of human society are not arbitrary; nor are those of the divine society. Governmental laws, human and divine, are built upon the laws of moral nature in God and man.

I am standing upon the ocean's beach and

look upon the sweep and sway of the boundless sea before me and the boundless blue above me, and at my feet are the trillions of grains of sand that make "the wondrous strand." In the distance is a sea bird, sailing as easily in its native air as a fish swims in the sea. With a radiance that I dare not look upon, the sun shines from his distant place in the heavens, giving light and warmth to all below.

All these are governed by law, as is all of nature. We call it natural law. No less are moral beings governed by natural law in the government of the heavenly Father and Judge. As natural law binds the planets and stars together in space by immutable decrees, so the moral laws of the universe bind moral individuals into a social whole by ties as imperative and eternal. Neither God nor man can ignore them, once they are established, unless he who made them annihilate the moral world, as he might the physical world.

Look at our theme from another illustrative viewpoint, and consider for a moment the natural laws of the family.

These laws are not simply physical—the relation, in the space called home, of two, five, or

eight physical beings under the influence of the law of gravitation and other physical laws—but mental and moral.

In all well-regulated homes there must be authority, governed, tempered, and guided by love.

But the laws of a good home must be obeyed, or there can be no good home.

The more thoroughly the laws of a happy home are known and observed in all matters the better for all the members of that home.

But the remark applies not more to the physical laws than to the mental and moral. The one are not more natural than the other, nor may the latter be ignored with impunity more readily than the former. The laws of mind and spirit in their mutual relations are as binding as are physical laws.

The moral laws of society and of the government of God are as binding as are the laws of the home.

Theology is man's broken vision of God, but the light that comes from him is a true light, and our vision is true as far as it goes.

While we may not find God out to perfection, yet from our moral nature and relations we may

know the necessities of moral society, and it is impossible rationally to think the atonement of the Son of God did not meet a necessary demand in this moral world.

There is no need to assume any less or any greater demand, and whatever other functions that atonement served they are not the most fundamental, and must be thought of as incidental to the main work accomplished. Christ serves in his sacrifice as a stimulating example of all heroic self-sacrifice and love, and the personal wrath of God is satisfied in the satisfaction of his governmental wrath; but the main necessity met in our Saviour was his harmonious adjustment of moral relations in a world of violated moral obligations.

4. Our forgiveness in Christ is given to us conditionally.

God forgives us in Christ, but on conditions.

This is part of his plan, and it is not to be supposed he can forgive us otherwise.

These are the conditions: First, if we repent of our sins, and, through faith, accept Christ as our atonement or reconciliation with God.

God offers forgiveness through Christ, he does not force it upon us. We must repent, we must

accept and trust Christ for salvation from our sins.

Why the heavenly King makes faith the connecting link between his mercy and the restoration of sinning and sinful men may be, on our part, matter of conjecture.

That he does cannot be gainsaid. Of Abraham it is said: "And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness." In the New Testament we read: "Therefore being justified [forgiven] by faith, we have peace with God." And the just and righteous "live by faith."

While our answer may not readily be given as to the reason, yet there is that in the nature of faith which suggests a reason. Faith is a natural quality of the soul and is the uplooking, receiving, constructive, trusting state of the mind, as well as the "substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

It is not conceivable that any good can come to man without the exercise of this faculty. To undertake to live without it is to demonstrate its radical place in life, attainment, and achievement. It is an element in every venture and adventure, in every discovery and invention. It

makes the warrior brave, the sick man patient, the toiler enduring. It anticipates the future, dispels the gloom of the grave, and gilds the entrance of the home immortal.

> "Faith looks to things unseen;
> It penetrates the darkest night
> Of mystery, and e'en
> That darkness is as light."

Now, such a faculty could not be left out in the soul's redemption, and it seems the only faculty fitted like a hand to lay hold of divine mercy and power. Like the trolley, it lays hold of power, and conveys to us that energy that is begotten in the Dynamo of the universe.

Moreover, when love is cold faith may be exercised and make our love to glow with a new fire; when hope is dim faith cheers it; when the conscience is full of guilt faith is able to "lay hold upon the hope set before us."

It is a faculty of the entire soul. It believes as a power of the mind upon suitable evidence, it trusts as an act of the sensibilities and the will.

It has been called "a sixth sense."

As an attitude of the mind toward God in which he can give to us the benefits of redemption, it can claim no merit, and makes a medium

for the flow of divine mercy and grace that offers no impediment.

Surely, God selected the right means of access to the souls of sinful beings for their salvation, and his wisdom as well as his grace is manifested in his plan of mercy through faith.

It is not genius, or talent, or learning that saves us, but faith. It may be found with genius and learning, but itself is neither; and he who believes can be saved though he be a stranger to both.

We must not fail to distinguish between faith as a principle, as a "sense" of the soul, as an act of uplooking and receiving, and faith as a creed.

Faith as a creed is dependent very much upon classified knowledge. In this sense it is and must be a growth.

Moreover, in this sense every man must make his own faith for himself, with whatever help he can get from the multiplied sources of Christian instruction. A creed cannot be crowded down a man's throat as certain domestic fowls are stuffed for fatting before the day of slaughter. A creed must be imbibed and become part of one's nature and life. It must be assimilated. Being so formed, it will be subject to variations

and modifications and additions and substractions.

Faith as an elemental principle of the nature and life, on the contrary, is not learned; it is instinctive, it is original, it is an eye of the soul with which everyone is born.

Faith as a creed is not to be despised and neglected.

Every intelligent man should seek by every means within his reach to form for himself as sensible a creed as it is possible for him to arrive at, and he should not ignore the creed of the Church while he thinks for himself. Nor should he forget that a "right spirit," and a clean life, and a saving faith, and a disposition to follow the light have much to do with the formation of a right creed. It was long ago said: "The heart's devotion makes the theologian," and still longer ago by the Master: "If any man will do his will [willeth to do his will] he shall know."

No truly Christian creed can be formed that is not unobstructed by moral impediments.

The aid of faith both as a principle whereby we "lay hold on eternal life" and as a creed, that is given in the Holy Spirit is not to be overlooked. Our natural faith is so helped, and "no

man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost."

May the Holy Spirit help our believing and trusting faith to "grasp the God we seek" in salvation in his dear Son and our Saviour!

It is definitive—persistent and final—unbelief that destroys us. The soul that shuts itself to the light and love of God cannot be saved.

The soul that refuses to accept salvation on God's terms cannot be saved.

Christ is "the author and finisher of our faith," and we have no business to change this "faith" in either its moral or doctrinal requirements. We must "run the race set before us" according to the laws of life and salvation instituted by the Founder of our faith.

As in the Greek stadium (the word itself meaning something "fixed") the racer kept the rules of the race, so must we run our race as Christ has ordained it for us.

Second, for forgiveness we must repent and believe in life or during life.

There is no indication in the Scriptures that, if a man dies without repentance and faith in Christ, he can ever thereafter be forgiven, even through the atonement. Death ends all the

chances of sinning men of being saved through the crucified Saviour. Death ends probation.

This is the constant word of the Bible. "Now" is the day of salvation, "now," in time and before death.

Third, we must amend our lives.

Forgiveness is no license to sin. "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the law."

The law stands under grace as well as outside of grace, even more so. "We establish the law." Sinai means more in the light of Calvary than without it; Moses, more in the light of Christ than without him; condemnation, more in the light of redemption than without it.

Forgiveness is not license to sin, but greater reason for righteousness. "Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?"

He who sins is not forgiven, and he who is forgiven does not sin. This is a condition of his forgiveness.

The story of Jack, the deaf-mute, is interesting and illustrates, in his own rather crude way, the biblical conception of redemption in Christ.

This was his idea. He said he had died and lain in the grave a long time. God called to him to come out of the grave and stand before him for judgment. God took a book, which Jack called the Bible book, and opened it, in which, he said, all his "bads" were written. God looked at it and could see "nothing" against Jack.

When the poor fellow was telling this conception of divine things to his teacher he was asked in much surprise, "Why, Jack, do you mean to say you have done no wrong?"

"O no!" replied the simple-hearted Christian, "I do not mean that. This is how it is: The reason God could see no 'bads' against me was because Jesus took something out of the wound in his hand made by the nail on the cross, and let the blood flow again, and then he drew his bloody hand over the page where my 'bads' were written, and so when God looked he could see no 'bads,' but only the blood of Jesus."

Then, when God could see no "bads" against Jack, Jesus came and put his great arms of love around him and drew him aside, and, after others were judged, Jack, with all the saved, went, with Jesus, into heaven.

This was the mute's crude conception of the redemption of Christ, but the idea is thoroughly Christian. The blood covers our sins, we are forgiven for Christ's sake, in him we are saved, and he is our Door into heaven.

"By me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and shall find pasture."

> "Jesus, thy blood and righteousness
> My beauty are, my glorious dress;
> 'Midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed,
> With joy shall I lift up my head."

The above is undoubtedly the plan of salvation presented to us in the Scriptures. The plan is not without difficulty for human thought.

The first difficulty pertains to the guilt of sin. Has the guilt of temporal sin *eternal* demerit? That it might have eternal *consequences* none will, perhaps, be disposed to deny. But when it is remembered that guilt is a rectoral condition, and that eternal punishment is a natural consequence of moral relations, or, it might be better said, a natural necessity of moral relations, the fact of eternal guilt and punishment does not seem impossible even to rational thought; and if the authority of the Scriptures is to be regarded the fact is certain.

Another difficulty is a moral one. Can sin be forgiven outright, the sinner not suffering the natural consequences or penalty of his sin, without jeopardy to his own moral discipline?

The Antinomian danger at this point, we admit, is very great.

It must be remembered, however, that not all the consequences of sin are avoided even in the atonement. We suffer somewhat for our sins even though forgiven.

David was forgiven for his sin against Uriah, but Nathan said to him: "Now therefore the sword shall not depart from thine house; because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife." He also said: "The Lord also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die. Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die." And the fasting, weeping, and earnest prayers of David could not change the decree, and the child died.

The sword, moreover, did not depart from his house.

Through Christ the eternal demerit of our

sins is remitted, but we do not go entirely free. We are "chastised" for our sins even though we are forgiven.

Let no one, therefore, think he can sin with impunity because he has a Saviour.

Besides, as shown before, our forgiveness is conditional upon right living.

Who will say an atonement with these provisions and safeguards inculcates indifference to righteous living? He who so asserts does so without understanding either the atonement or the laws of the moral world even under the terms of divine mercy.

The theistic and metaphysical difficulties of the incarnation are common to all the articles of our historic creed, and not peculiar to the present doctrine. The Trinity is not only a possibility, but a probability, and the incarnation a fitting and possible climax to the ascent of humanity in its evolution Godward. In the human Christ mankind had reached a stage in development where the Son of God could become "flesh" and dwell "among us" as Immanuel or Theanthropos. When Christ came "the fullness of time" had come not only historically, but evolutionally.

III.

Divine Help in Human Weakness.

"I held it truth, with him who sings
To one clear harp in divers tones,
That men may rise on stepping stones
Of their dead selves to higher things.

"But who shall so forecast the years
And find in loss a gain to match?
Or reach a hand through time to catch
The far-off interest of tears?"—*Tennyson.*

"The development of the new life in the soul, from its first unseen beginnings, onward to its perfected state in bliss, embraces a multitude of human circumstances, and holy influences of the Spirit; and presents an inexhaustible mine of study in the departments of ethics and moral psychology."—*Martensen.*

"As the goal of sanctification is a perfection of moral goodness which shall forever exclude the possibility of evil, and yet be the outgo of the highest freedom, so the development of evil ends in a state wherein unwillingness to goodness has ripened into inability, wherein personality, persisting in alienation from God, has become absolutely petrified in sin."—*Julius Müller.*

III.

Divine Help in Human Weakness.

"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"—Rom. viii, 32.

In the foregoing sermons I have shown that God is righteous and must demand righteousness of all moral intelligences; that all have morally failed, or sinned, and come short of the necessary demands of righteousness, and are therefore guilty of death; that the eternal penalty of sin is due to all, because all have sinned, and that the atonement is God's plan in the moral world whereby he can uphold his throne and all intelligent, moral society, and yet forgive those who have violated his demands of righteousness.

For all who repent of their sins, accept, by faith, Christ as their Redeemer, and intend to live a new or righteous life, God can and does grant this forgiveness, and can be and is at the same time a righteous moral Ruler, upholding the laws of the moral world and the laws of a

happy and blessed society among finite, intelligent, moral beings—angelic and human.

The atonement, then, is God's way of forgiveness.

But we need more than forgiveness: we need help in our weakness, and I wish to speak to-night of this human weakness and the divine help that is given to us, whereby we may be righteous and live righteously in "this present evil world."

1. We have a sinful nature, and need power to overcome it.

If you will read the seventh chapter of the Epistle to the Romans you will there find this moral struggle portrayed by an apostle's hand.

There Paul tells us, and he tells us what all feel, that in human nature—awakened human nature, human nature wanting to do right—there are two conflicting dispositions, one toward the right and one toward the wrong. The law of the awakened and repentant mind is toward the good, while the law of sin in the nature rebels against the law of conviction and repentance, and conquers us, bringing us into subjection to the "law of sin which is in our members."

In utter despair of ever overcoming this sin-

ful nature, the apostle exclaims, and his exclamation is the despairing cry of humanity, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

Ovid, the Roman poet, has said in similar strain:

"I see the right, and I approve it too,
Condemn the wrong, and yet the wrong pursue."

What was said by the poet in the following lines of another matter does not inaptly describe the helplessness of an awakened nature seeking fruitlessly to free itself from itself:

"Which way I fly is hell; myself am hell;
And in the lowest deep a lower deep,
Still threatening to devour me, opens wide,
To which the hell I suffer seems a heaven."

What converted man has not at some time had a mortal combat with sin that even such language does not exaggerate? Perhaps he has had it often, until prostrate from trying he has ceased trying and trusted.

This, I say, is the struggle of a soul that wants to do right.

If one does not want to do right he will have no struggle. One who is willing to be led by the

Evil One as he wills, will, of course, have no fight with wrong. There can only be moral conflict where one is fighting against the inclinations of a sinful nature.

But even such a one cannot conquer his nature alone.

There is a way, however, by which he can. "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Here is victory over depravity; here is deliverance from the corpse of a sinful nature; here is triumph over the law of sin in our members.

"Who shall deliver me?" Christ will deliver.

How will he deliver? By the washing of regeneration, by the new birth, by sanctification of the Holy Ghost. Yes, even entire sanctification is for him who believes in Jesus—complete emancipation from the bondage of a sinful nature, so that perfect faith, perfect love, perfect purity, perfect consecration reign supreme in the spirit and life.

Such is the mighty help God gives us through his Son in our helpless human sinfulness.

2. We live in a sinful environment.

We contend not only with the flesh, but with the world. We live and associate with all manner of bad people, the unjust, the unclean,

the unbelieving. This is not easy if we wish to be just, clean, and full of faith.

If we could always be with the good a righteous life would be made easier.

And yet it is possible for us to be pure in an impure world, to be holy in the midst of filth, as the swan can swim in a sewer and not have its white plumage defiled.

Indeed, Christ prayed for this for his followers. "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil," not that thou shouldest take them away from temptation, not that thou shouldest destroy the devil, but that thou shouldest keep them in temptation, that thou shouldest give them victory over the devil.

It is an old remark that there may be innocence, but no virtue without temptation. "If ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans so?" An unfriendly environment both develops virtue and merits reward; but "who is sufficient for these things?"

Our adverse environment includes the evil agency of bad spirits. "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the

darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness [spiritual hosts of wickedness] in high places."

By what authority can anyone say that evil spirits may not be about us and tempt us as good spirits "minister" to us?

Our weakness is in our surroundings, but Christ can make us triumph. There is much in the world to cause us to sin, but there is more in grace to cause us to conquer. Christ conquered in a sinful environment, and he will enable all who trust in him to conquer also. "Greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world."

3. We live in an environment of trial and suffering.

Many, who would like to do good and live righteously, are made to stumble through trouble, through bereavement, through affliction.

Perhaps we sin as easily through suffering as through temptation. In trouble we murmur, we doubt, we deny. In sorrow we become discouraged and surrender.

This is a condition of things we have often met and been defeated by.

Is there any way then by which we can live

righteously in our sufferings? The answer is "Yes," and the way is the same—through Christ.

What assurances of victory over trouble there are in the Bible for the Christian! "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ [Christ's love for us]? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? . . . Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

This is the unfailing word of Scripture everywhere. "And they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."

A train is headed toward one destination. A switchman turns the switch at a certain place in the road and the train arrives in a very different city from the one it would have reached had it gone on its way without the switchman's intervention.

God is a switchman who turns a switch in our lives often, if needed, and keeps us, while we trust him, headed toward the eternal city.

Five distinct times does the writer know of in his life when, in his extremity, God's hand reached down and turned the switch in his affairs and "saved him out of all his troubles."

A minister of the Gospel was at one period of his life discouraged and in doubt of almost everything, even his divine ambassadorship. He had decided to leave his work and begin his vocational life anew. At the mid-week prayer meeting just preceding the day of formal decision, a young man, who knew nothing whatever of the preacher's intentions, prayed this significant prayer: "Lord, bless our pastor, and, having put his hand to the plow, may he not look back." Under the circumstances, what to the young man certainly had no special significance was most startling to the despondent minister. With other things of a like apparently providential import, it had not a little to do with his future fidelity to his divine commission. It seemed like the hand of God turning the switch in his servant's career and causing the future to appear plain to him.

"Only a little thing, you say,
That guides the ship's wide going;
Only a little thing one day
May turn the tide of your doing."

Moreover, these very troubles which overthrow us when out of Christ's hand minister to us when we love him.

"All things work together for good to them that love God."

We are made perfect, as was Christ himself, through suffering. We enter heaven through "great tribulation."

The poet Milton, speaking of his own blindness, says:

"On my bended knee
I recognize Thy purpose clearly shown:
My vision thou hast dimmed, that I may see
Thyself—thyself alone."

The taking away of the poet's natural vision increased his spiritual vision.

There is a story that tells of a man who went on a journey, and was overtaken by a wolf, which killed his horse, but, in killing the horse, the wolf became entangled in the harness, and carried the man to the end of his journey more quickly than the horse could have done.

Our troubles are wolves that devour our in-

terests often, but they do better for us, if we are in Christ, than those things they take from us.

The devil himself is a minister of good to him who loves and trusts the Saviour. He did Christ no harm in his temptation, and sifted or winnowed Peter, separating much of the chaff from the wheat in his character.

"Then welcome each rebuff
That turns earth's smoothness rough,
Each sting that bids nor sit nor stand, but go!
Be our joys three parts pain,
Strive, nor hold cheap the strain;
Learn, nor account the pang; dare, never grudge the throe;
For thence—a paradox,
Which comforts while it mocks—
Shall life succeed in that it seems to fail."

There is only one condition of all this divine deliverance—namely, letting God have his way with us and in us.

When I was a boy I once had a pigeon that had a broken wing. I tried faithfully to so fix that wing that it would properly heal. But the pigeon did not understand, and would not let me do as I purposed to do, and when I thought I had the wing properly fixed in rude splints the

poor creature foolishly broke away from what evidently seemed needless restraint to it.

Are we not like that pigeon? Are we not afraid of God? and do we not fight against him?

Keep yourself in God's hands and he will save you—save you from a sinful nature, from a sinful environment, from all trouble and sorrow and tribulation.

He will give you complete victory, and crown you at last in glory.

Humanity is sometimes compared to a fallen vine. It once clung to the trellis, was a thing of beauty, and bore fruit. Now it lies prone upon the ground, is trampled upon, and is fruitless. Again it can be placed upon the trellis and made to bear fruit, to the delight of God and man.

Christ is our Trellis; by faith we cling to him, by faith in him we overcome the world and all its sin and suffering.

Reader, accept this divine help in your own weakness. Let God save you; he is anxious to do it, can do it, and will do it.

The victory that overcometh the world is our faith in Christ.

"By faith we know thee strong to save;
Save us, a present Saviour thou:
Whate'er we hope, by faith we have;
Future and past subsisting now.

"To him that in thy name believes,
Eternal life with thee is given;
Into himself he all receives,
Pardon, and holiness, and heaven."

We must not overlook the fact that the Holy Spirit is the blessed agent and coefficient of this redeeming work among men. He regenerates and sanctifies us and "helpeth our infirmities." He is our ever-present Comforter" (Helper). He is among the "all things" of the text "freely" given to us. It is through him that we triumph.

"Holy Spirit, Fount of blessing,
Ever watchful, ever kind,
Thy celestial aid possessing,
Prisoned souls deliverance find
Seal of truth, and Bond of union,
Source of light, and Flame of love,
Symbol of divine communion,
In the olive-bearing dove;

"Heavenly Guide from paths of error,
Comforter of minds distressed,
When the billows fill with terror,
Pointing to an ark of rest;

Promised Pledge, eternal Spirit,
Greater than all gifts below,
May our hearts thy grace inherit;
May our lips thy glories show!"

Subordinately, angels are "ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation." "He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone."

Who shall tell how much these heavenly visitants to our earth help those to whom they are commissioned?

Departed saints and friends are among the angels, and, in some instances, these glorified mortals are called angels. When John fell down at the feet of the angel in his visions on Patmos, to worship him, he was told: "See thou do it not: for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God."

Why not believe the departed loved are among the ministering angels?

"Sweet souls around us! watch us still,
Press nearer to our side,
Into our thoughts, into our prayers,
With gentle helpings glide."

"Are souls straight so happy that, dizzy with heaven,
They drop earth's affection, conceive not of woe?
I think not. Themselves were too lately forgiven
Through that Love and Sorrow which reconciled so
The Above and Below."

There is nothing at all incredible in the thought of angelic ministrations. Spirits in the flesh help us: why may not spirits out of the flesh?

When one considers the usual and well-known powers of the mind, and reflects on its hypnotic and telepathic powers, who shall undertake to determine the "metes and bounds" of spirit possibility?

Hundreds of authentic cases of telepathic communication are scientifically attested, some being made at a distance of thousands of miles.

"The action of one mind upon another at a distance, the transmission of thought, mental suggestion, communication at a distance, all these are not more extraordinary than the action of the magnet on iron, the influence of the moon on the sea, the transportation of the human voice by electricity, the revelation of the chemical constituents of a star by the analysis of its light, or, indeed, all the wonders of contem-

porary science. Only these psychic transmissions are of a more elevated kind."

> "Star to star vibrates light; may soul to soul
> Strike through some finer element of her own?"

The Holy Spirit, also, has other agencies for our deliverance.

We are both regenerated and sanctified mediately through the Bible. St. Peter tells us we are "born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God," and Christ prayed, "Sanctify them through [in] thy truth: thy word is truth."

No doubt all nature and all appointed agencies—as human and Christian fellowship, the sacraments and service of the Church, good reading, prayer, and meditation—are media of the Spirit's grace.

"WALK IN THE SPIRIT."

He who thus walks is armed cap-a-pie against all sin, all temptation, all trial.

We break the connection, we take the trolley off, we allow our locks of strength to be shorn off, and we become "weak" and "as another man."

Our source of strength is God, not ourselves.

IV.

Our Finished Salvation, or the Consummation of Life.

What am I? Only a ray into darkness fading away,
Gleaming, beaming, brightly shining,
Dimming, fading, fast declining,
Now into the blackest night,
Hast'ning on this ray of light?
—*From verses written by the author in 1879.*

"Strong Son of God, immortal Love,
Whom we, that have not seen thy face,
By faith, and faith alone, embrace,
Believing where we cannot prove;

"Thine are these orbs of light and shade;
Thou madest Life in man and brute;
Thou madest Death; and lo, thy foot
Is on the skull which thou hast made.

"Thou wilt not leave us in the dust:
Thou madest man, he knows not why;
He thinks he was not made to die;
And thou hast made him: thou art just."
—*Tennyson.*

"Life! we've been long together,
Through pleasant and through cloudy weather.
'Tis hard to part when friends are dear—
Perhaps 'twill cost a sigh, a tear;
Then steal away, give little warning,
Choose thine own time;
Say not 'Good night,' but in some brighter clime
Bid me 'Good morning.'"—*Mrs. Barbauld.*

"Mysterious night! when our first parent knew
Thee from report divine, and heard thy name,
Did he not tremble for this lovely frame,
This glorious canopy of light and blue?
Yet 'neath a curtain of translucent dew,
Bathed in the rays of the great setting flame,
Hesperus with the host of heaven came,
And lo! creation widened in man's view.
Who could have thought such darkness lay concealed
Within thy beams, O sun! or who could find,
Whilst fly, and leaf, and insect stood revealed,
That to such countless orbs thou mad'st us blind!
Why do we then shun Death with anxious strife?
If light can thus deceive, wherefore not life."

—*Blanco White.*

"I look to see science prove immortality."—*Kate Field.*

"If I say that the immortality of the soul, already demonstrated by philosophy, will be speedily proved by psychic sciences, more than one skeptic will smile at my assertion."—*Camille Flammarion.*

"There is no death! The stars go down
To rise upon some fairer shore,
And bright in heaven's jeweled crown
They shine forever more."

—*Edward Bulwer Lytton.*

"There is an eternal blessedness through the transfiguring consummation of nature, of individuals, and of the kingdom of God."—*Dorner.*

"The Scriptures serve to set the joy of heaven before us so as powerfully to allure, but not so as to satisfy curiosity."— *S. J. Hunter.*

IV.

Our Finished Salvation, or the Consummation of Life.

"Whom he justified, them he also glorified."—Rom. viii, 30.

The immortality of the soul has long been believed on the ground of philosophy and the Scriptures. In these days it seems destined to be demonstrated by science.

Unless all signs fail, the psychic sciences will one day prove, not only that the soul is a separate entity from the body, but that it survives the body's dissolution.

In connection with this, the scientific investigation of Spiritualism may throw light upon the problem of our future existence. At least the ordinary explanation of many of the phenomena of this class is far from satisfactory.

Evolution already throws new and added light upon the problem. How little likely does it seem that God would take infinite pains and time to create the soul of man only to let it fall into nothingness again after a few brief years of

mortal existence on the earth? The æons of the soul's evolution, and the infinite patience in the steps by which God made the soul through evolution, testify to its immortal nature in the design of a wise and good Creator.

Nature has always furnished analogies intimating the soul's indestructibility, and these have often been dwelt upon, notably by Bishop Butler in his immortal *Analogy*. Matter is indestructible. It is never destroyed or annihilated, but only changed. It may be asked if personality (nature's higher form of reality) is an exception, and is to perish in the body's dissolution? There is reason to think the tiniest life on the globe—even that of the animalculæ, millions of which are said to inhabit a drop of water—will never perish.

The theme never loses its charm, and the bursting of the flower from the seed, the beautiful butterfly from the chrysalis, the bird from the shell, and a thousand other things, suggest at least the possibility of the soul's survival of death in a higher form of life.

The soul's "longing after immortality" and its "inward horror of falling into naught" also suggest its immortal destiny. It is the soul's in-

stinct of survival which turns toward eternity, as the instinct of the bee guides it to the flower, or the instinct of the bird guides it to its Southern home though the journey has never been made before.

Upon the basis of the soul's immortality are all of the promises of heaven contained in the Bible.

What a world of meaning lies in the single phrase of the divine word that I use as a text? In and between those two words "justified" and "glorified" lies everything in man's salvation, his forgiveness, his regeneration, his sanctification, his adoption into the divine family, his ultimate triumph over death, and his coronation in heaven.

Indeed, the apostle goes back into past eternity, and forward into the future eternity, and shows us that our salvation is from God in its beginning and in its ending. "Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son. . . . Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified."

God foreknew, predestinated, and calls, conditionally, all who will repent and accept Christ as their Saviour, and for a complete and a completed salvation.

This he will accomplish for all who will let him.

In this word "glorified" is expressed the completion of salvation, or the consummation of the Christian life.

Let us see what the word involves.

1. It involves moral and spiritual perfection.

Indeed, moral and spiritual perfection must come to us before we enter heaven. Nothing unholy ever enters in through the gates of pearl into that holy city. All that is unclean is and must be left outside, as all that are unholy at death are cast into hell.

We need not wait till death to be made holy, we can be made holy now; but, if not before, we must be made holy at death, in order to enter heaven. Our glorified life is a life without moral or spiritual defect or infirmity. Heaven is a state of Christian perfection.

"I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless [entire, without blame] unto [at] the coming of our Lord Jesus

Christ." "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever."

2. Our "glorified" state involves perfection of knowledge.

I do not mean to say that we will not grow in knowledge or increase our knowledge in heaven: this we certainly will do, and will forever learn of God and his ways; but in a certain and true sense our knowledge will be perfect when we enter heaven.

"For now we see through a glass, darkly [or in a mirror, obscurely]; but then face to face [plainly]: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known."

Human knowledge may increase in heaven, but our knowledge when we enter heaven will be purged of its earthly dross and imperfection; unmixed with human mistake or error.

A large element that enters into the joy of this life is the pursuit and discovery of knowledge—knowledge of the new, and intensified knowledge of the old.

When Archimedes stepped into the bath, and, observing the overflow of the water as he did so, discovered the method of detecting the alloy in the crown of his master without destroying the crown, he exclaimed in great rapture, "Eureka —I have found it!"

What word or language would express the multiplied joy that has filled the hearts of men as from time to time they have had the secrets of nature revealed to them? Who will tell the feeling of Newton when he discovered the law of gravitation? of Columbus when he discovered the New World? of Fulton when he discovered the method of the application of steam to navigation? of Morse when he discovered the electric telegraph? of Edison when he discovered the telephone? or of Darwin, and Wallace, and Spencer, and a multitude of others as they have discovered the laws of evolution?

And who can tell the joy that comes to us all as, in lower spheres, new vistas of truth and thought open on our vision?

If the joy of earthly knowledge and discovery be so great what must the larger knowledge and truth of heaven afford?

The completest range of earthly knowledge

and vision is but the alphabet of eternal knowledge.

There are wonders and beauties in the natural world that do not appear to our unaided vision on the earth.

For instance, the planet Saturn has eight moons, and it is said: "The magnificence of the scenery upon this planet must surpass anything with which we are familiar. The rings form an immense arch, which spans the sky and sheds a soft radiance around; while, to add to the strange beauty of the night, eight moons in all their different phases—full, new, crescent, or gibbous—light up the starry vault."

The world is beautiful, and yet there are beauties of which we know that surpass the beauty of this world! What glories will the immortal vision reveal to us!

Will there be roses in heaven? There will be beauty there, and fragrance too, and things, perhaps, not yet revealed to our quintet of earthly senses.

3. Our "glorified" state is a state of perfect happiness. Here sorrow abides even in the most perfect Christian life.

Even Christ, who was always morally perfect,

was a "man of sorrows"—sorrows, no doubt, due to the sin of others, but, nevertheless, sorrows.

Our sorrows, likewise, may be due to sin, but they remain through all our earthly preparation for heaven.

They are made to serve the Christian life and are ministers of good to those who serve God, and yet they are sorrows. Life is full of tears.

We have the promise, however, that there will be no sorrow in heaven. In that perfect state all this will be done away. "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."

This is millennial language, but the earthly millennium is a type of heaven, as the Jewish dispensation was a type of the Christian; and the language is a literal description in heaven of what can only be figuratively true of the highest condition of the kingdom of Christ on earth.

The psychological possibility of such a state it may be difficult to grasp, and yet it is not inconceivable. When it is remembered that our unhappiness on earth is due to our sins and circumstances, a condition in heaven like to certain

rare moments here seems a glorious and uninterrupted possibility.

There will, most likely, be shades and lights in our life in heaven. Eternal bliss will not be an eternal stare.

There will be mountain peak and valley experiences, but the lowest level of experience will be above the "vale of tears."

4. Our "glorified" state involves a perfect service.

In heaven we will certainly serve. "And his servants shall serve him."

To the servant whose pound gained ten pounds, Christ, in the parable, says, "Have thou authority over ten cities," and to him whose pound gained five pounds he says, "Have thou authority over five cities."

As in these instances, so in all the intimations of heaven in the Scriptures, the thought of heaven as a place of service is brought before us.

But our service there will be perfect, as here it is imperfect.

Our service in heaven will be perfect in the sense that every man will be in his right place, or in his niche. Here men are not always fitted to their sphere. Hence we are not as happy as

we might be. In heaven it will be otherwise, and all work will be a pleasure.

The drudgery of labor will not be a part of our heavenly service. Labor will be normal and a delight.

5. Our "glorified" state includes perfect worship.

Yes, we will worship in heaven. Perhaps there will be heavenly preaching; why not?

The angels sing, and we will sing. We will sing the "song of Moses and the Lamb"—a song of redemption, a song of triumph.

I doubt not the song of our triumph will engage the perfected talent of poet and musician there, and all will love to sing of our Redeemer.

6. In our "glorified" state we will live in a perfect environment.

"There the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest."

O, what delight will this be! Our companionships all holy, our associations all holy, no sin and no sorrow there!

There will we meet our friends and dear ones, whom we parted with in their weakness, in strength and joy.

How different they will appear to us! And

yet we will know them. They helped us here; they will be able to help us more there.

O, what blessed fellowship will be ours in that perfect home!

"Over the river they beckon to me—
"Loved ones who have crossed to the farther side;
The gleam of their snowy robes I see,
But their voices are drowned in the rushing tide.

"I shall know the loved who have gone before,
And joyfully sweet will the meeting be,
When over the river, the peaceful river,
The angel of Death shall carry me."

7. Our "glorified" state involves a perfect body.

Our bodies are full of infirmities here; they will be full of strength there.

"It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body."

There will be no sickness in heaven, there will be no pain, no death.

"'Twas sown in weakness here;
'Twill then be raised in power:
That which was sown an earthly seed
Shall rise a heavenly flower."

The difference in our bodies when sick and well is suggestive of a change that is possible in our resurrection. What a difference, for example, between our bodies when in fever and when in health! Our healthiest condition here is as sickness compared to our "immortal" and "incorruptible" bodies.

There are those who affect to despise the body and pretend to think little of our future bodily life.

Such certainly miss the revealed significance of this part of our manifold nature. It is far from certain that a disembodied condition is the highest condition for us. If so, why do we live in bodies now?

Besides, the New Testament doctrine of our bodily resurrection does not countenance the idea. The disembodied condition of our friends in heaven is, no doubt, better than our embodied condition here; but the consummation of life, according to the Scriptures, is not till the resurrection. The reunion of a redeemed and perfected spirit with a raised and "changed" body is our complete equipment of life for our eternal home.

Just what will be the nature of the bodily life

in all particulars in heaven we are not told, nor may we guess. Will we have other senses? It is not likely.

The senses we possess, however, may be greatly heightened in their capacity of enjoyment. Why not? They can be cultivated and refined and heightened here.

Will our bodies need nourishment? In Eden there was the "tree of life," and in the New Eden, which prefigures for us our heavenly home, there is another "tree of life," which bears "twelve manner of fruits." The resurrected Christ "ate" before his doubting disciples "a piece of a broiled fish," and also, probably, ate with them at the seashore.

What, precisely, will be the food we will eat, supposing we will need food, we will not try to determine. Suffice it to say, it will be food adapted to our glorified condition, a new "manna" fitted for our new life.

Some of the functions of the bodily life will have passed away. Christ said: "They which are accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage."

Even in our present bodies we have remnants

of once useful organs, now atrophied. The physiologist is familiar with many of these. They tell us the bygone history of the body's evolution, but serve no other useful purpose.

So in heaven the higher functions of the body will predominate, and those functions that have no longer any use will remain, perhaps, as remnants of our lower existence, no longer functional, but atrophied, fossil remains of our resurrection.

8. The companionship of our Saviour will be the crown of our glory.

> "And I shall see him face to face,
> And tell the story, Saved by grace."

Blessed vision! "Wonderful story of love!"

> "'Forever with the Lord!'
> Amen, so let it be!
> Life from the dead is in that word,
> 'Tis immortality."

This it is, and more, to be "glorified."

We have suggestions of what heaven will be, but we know only in a measure. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is."

"O glorious hour! O blest abode!
I shall be near, and like my God;
And flesh and sin no more control
The sacred pleasures of the soul."

Heaven is the glorified continuity of the Christian life begun on earth.

There is no break between this life and the other. We enter heaven on much the same level as we end our earthly career. Death is "transition" only. It is a door out into the larger life, a bridge, a tunnel from the city terrestrial to the city celestial.

Only in heaven there will be limitless growth and unfettered opportunity.

Our life there will be physical, mental, and spiritual as it is here.

The heavenly life is not only continuous, but contiguous.

The extent of that blessed country we may not know: it may include the "stars," as some are prone to think; but there can be no doubt that it is also about us.

"It lies around us like a cloud—
A world we do not see;
Yet the sweet closing of an eye
May bring us there to be."

This is the unfailing impression we get from the Scriptures everywhere.

How the angels, who are in heaven, crowd around the earthly life in both the old and the new dispensation! They appear to Abraham and Daniel and a host of others, and are the constant attendants of our Lord from the manger to the cross.

In the twofold reference (Greek and Jewish) in the twelfth chapter of Hebrews (1-3) the apostle Paul evidently sanctions the view that the departed heroes of the faith are witnesses of our Christian race; interested and sympathetic spectators, ready to feel disappointed and chagrined at our failure, and ready joyfully to applaud our successes.

This same apostle was once, according to his own testimony, caught up into heaven while in the body, and heard things that he was not permitted to tell us.

John on Patmos saw visions that represented near realities.

If one will read the Scriptures with the thought in view he will be surprised to note how much they contain giving us to feel that "heaven is not far away."

All the details and occupations of that life are not given to us.

While it is well to know the future in a measure, it is not well to know it too closely. Such a knowledge would undoubtedly unfit us for the duties and moral discipline of this life.

Besides, could we look into the face of the sun and not be injured by the sight? No more might we know all of heaven with impunity to our present spiritual capacity. It is well that "now we know in part." We may be sure, however, that our employment there will be blessed. This is enough.*

Even in the crude hopes and desires of uninspired humanity concerning heaven there is at least this truth: The soul will be satisfied. "I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness."

When the Indian thinks of heaven as "a happy hunting ground," or the Esquimau thinks of it as a land of perpetual sun where there are plenty of walrus and fish, or the Buddhist thinks of it as Nirvana—"immovable rest"—or even

*Such books as *Intra Muros*, whatever view we may adopt to explain the strange experience of its author, serve to make us realize that heaven is more than an indefinite hope, or an endless continuity of nothings.

the Mohammedan thinks of it as a "harem," there is in such ideas an unconscious adumbration of a state of fulfilled desires.

The inspired Scriptures themselves picture heaven to us in somewhat the same manner, and their "jasper walls" and "golden streets" and "glassy sea" and "gates of pearl" and "tree of life" and "healing leaves" testify to the same blessed reality of complete fruition.

Heaven is the perfection of moral human beings for a perfect society.

God is righteous, and demands righteousness of all, he forgives the sinner who repents and believes in Jesus, regenerates, sanctifies, keeps, and glorifies those who will let him, and, while upholding his government by imperative laws of right, justifies or makes us right, and finally unites a perfected people in a perfected condition of holiness and happiness forever.

Hence heaven is the final answer and outcome of God's righteous plan of redemption in the salvation of the sinful through the blood of the cross.

"Hark, hark, my soul! angelic songs are swelling
O'er earth's green fields and ocean's wave-beat shore:
How sweet the truth those blessed strains are telling
Of that new life when sin shall be no more!"

The Moral Universe.

"The world is very evil,
  The times are waxing late:
Be sober and keep vigil,
  The Judge is at the gate;
The Judge that comes in mercy,
  The Judge that comes with might,
To terminate the evil,
  To diadem the right."

POSTSCRIPT.

THE reader has not failed to observe, from what has been said, that everything in our salvation is to be understood from the standpoint of necessary righteousness.

So, likewise, everything in the condemnation of the sinful and the lost is to be understood from the same standpoint. Righteousness is the great word of life and destiny. If we are not righteous, we must be made righteous, or we can never enter heaven.

God's plan of salvation is to make us righteous. Reader, do not frustrate his righteous purpose in YOU!

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